March/April, 1983

Lasca Leaves

Los Angeles County Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens

Christmas Open House

THE SPIRIT of a traditional Victorian Christmas filled the Queen Anne Cottage with warmth for the biennial open house Dec. 11 and 12. The open house in 1982 was remarkable not only because people may tour the cottage so rarely, but also because it was the first public showing of the renovated cottage interior, repainted for the first time since it was restored in 1951.

Sandy Snider, historical curator, pointed out to visitors how the new paint enhances the colors in the draperies, woodwork and stained glass windows.

"The new color scheme focuses attention on parts of the cottage that are the originals," she said. "You see more than you saw before, and people are spending more time looking in the windows."

At a preview party Dec. 10, 350 members and their guests enjoyed refreshments and Christmas melodies played by a string quartet before touring the cottage.

Once inside the festively decorated cottage, guests were surrounded by garlands and wreaths made by the volunteers from fresh evergreen boughs. A 13-foot Christmas tree glittered in the music room, and a

Sandy Snider

More than 2,600 visitors toured the Queen Anne cottage during the biennial open house in December.

Laurie Schenden

Kelly Golden, 2, wears a dress from the Arboretum's collection of Victorian-era clothing as she admires open house preparations.

William Aplin

Money may not grow on trees, but with the help of guests at the preview party, this Christmas tree sprouted dollars needed for further cottage restoration.

tree in the parlor was decorated with authentic period ornaments loaned by Jackie Chamberlain, a California Arboretum Foundation member. A diminutive tree in the bedroom surrounded by antique dolls from the Arboretum collection and Victorian-era toys on loan from the Museum of Natural History stirred youthful dreams of Christmas.

On Saturday and Sunday, 2,600 persons took advantage of the open house to tour the cottage. Profits from the open house will go towards reupholstering the antique furniture in the cottage.

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Right *Jean (Mrs. John Jr.) Atkinson models an elaborately draped and decorated Victorian wedding gown at the preview open house.*

Below *Helen (Mrs. John) Swanfeldt, one of the 60 history volunteers who led visitors through the cottage, points out details of a ceiling medallion.*

Sandy Snider

Laurie Schenden

(From left) Richard Weiss presents watercolors of the Queen Anne Cottage rooms to John S. Shepherd, CAF president. Gerald West represented the Southern California Paint and Coatings Association which sponsored the work of designer Foster Meagher (far right).

Queen Anne Cottage Repainting

THE RENOVATION of the Queen Anne Cottage was a joint project of the Southern California Paint and Coatings Association and the California Arboretum Foundation and everyone agreed that the result was a striking success. The SCPCA sponsored Foster Meagher, a designer with a nationwide reputation for innovative color designs. The California Arboretum Foundation provided the paint and services of Anthony Triarsi, a specialist in the meticulous detail work required when repainting historical buildings.

Mr. Meagher specified different colors for each room accented by blue and white molding and rosettes throughout the cottage. Because the colors are so dramatically different from those applied more than 30 years ago, he had renderings done in water color to illustrate how the finished rooms would look.

At the open house preview party Dec. 10, Richard Weiss, director of consumer products for the National Paint and Coatings Association presented the renderings to John Shepherd, president of the California Arboretum Foundation. During the presentation, Mr. Weiss said that the cottage is similar architecturally to a building in St. Louis that the NPCA painted last year.

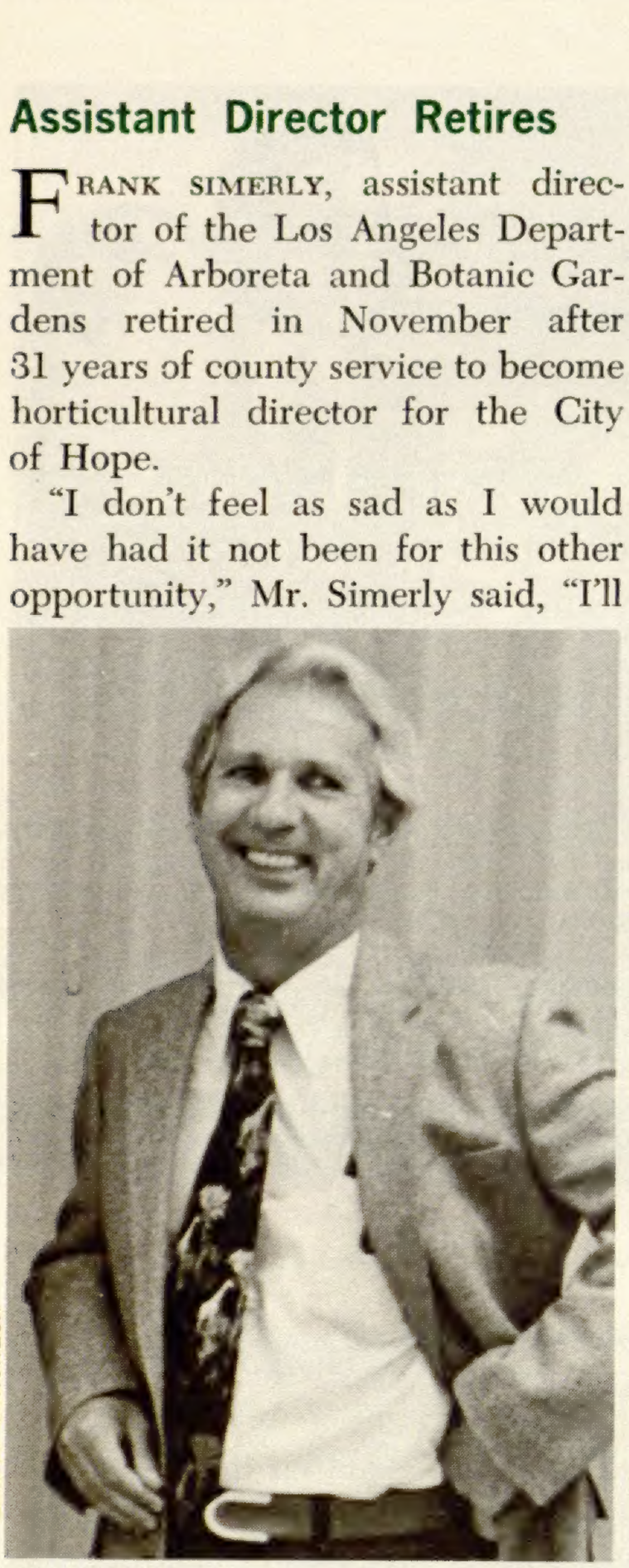
"It has many of the same contrasting colors and these are the kinds of things we like to show people," he said. "We want them to know they don't have to paint everything white."

The group making the final tour of the evening was composed of NPCA members Mr. and Mrs. Romer Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. William Peters (also a member of the CAF Board of Trustees), Mr. Weiss, and Mr. Meagher. Also included were guests affiliated with the SCPCA, Mr. Gerald West, president of the SCPCA and Michael Nilsson and his wife, singer Vicki Carr.

Assistant Director Retires

FRANK SIMERLY, assistant director of the Los Angeles Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens retired in November after 31 years of county service to become horticultural director for the City of Hope.

"I don't feel as sad as I would have had it not been for this other opportunity," Mr. Simerly said, "I'll still have a relationship with the Arboretum."



Laurie Schendenen

Frank Simerly

Mr. Simerly spent 28 years of his county service with the Department, starting as a grounds maintenance worker in 1954. He worked his way up as a gardener, head of information, assistant superintendent at Descanso Gardens and, in 1970, Arboretum superintendent. In 1973, Francis Ching, Arboretum director, appointed Mr. Simerly assistant director to coordinate horticultural efforts at all department facilities and direct the development of the gardens. Since then, he has supervised many long-term projects.

Mr. Simerly coordinated construction of the new Education and Administration complex at Descanso Gardens, donated by Descanso Gardens Guild, and acted as a liaison between the gardens' supporting organizations and the Department.

He helped design and implement a plan at South Coast Botanic Gardens that deals with the unusual circumstances of planting over a sanitary landfill. Problems the Department faced included settling and sprinkler breakage and heat generated by the refuse that damaged plant roots. Today, South Coast Botanic Garden is an example of successful land reclamation.

Mr. Simerly was often the spokesperson for the Department. He represented the Arboretum in negotiations with the Arcadia Chamber of Commerce and the Arcadia Rotary Club to bring popular entertainers like Harry James, Rick Nelson and the Kingston Trio to the Arboretum. He was a member of an advisory committee that sought to save California native oak trees by enforcing laws regulating their removal and highway planners also often sought his advice on suitable roadside plantings.

His retirement luncheon at the Arboretum was attended by representatives of the Board of Governors, Arcadia Chamber of Commerce, friends and coworkers. Janice Golden gave him an album of his magazine articles, news clippings of his accomplishments and photographs of Arboretum employees.

"The success of the county's three botanic gardens is largely due to Frank's hard work and concern for their· betterment," Mr. Ching said. "We'll miss him."

New on our Shelves

Shrubs, Trees and Climbers. 9th ed., rev., 1981.

Wild Flowers of Southern Africa. 6th ed., rev., 1980.

Proteas for Pleasure. 5th ed., 1979.

All published by Macmillan South African Publishers, Johannesburg and distributed in the U.S. by ISBS, Inc., Beaverton, Oregon.

THE CLIMATE of Southern California is so similar to South Africa's that local gardeners can often apply information about South African plants and horticulture literally when planning their own landscapes. Three new books in the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum library illustrate this appropriateness. *Shrubs, Trees and Climbers; Wild Flowers of Southern Africa;* and *Proteas for Pleasure,* recent editions of books by Sima Elivoson, a well-known horticultural writer, are now available in the U.S.

The first is *Shrubs, Trees and Climbers.* Anyone not aware of similarities between our climate and that of South Africa will be astounded by the list of plants included; it looks like a book tailored for Southern California. After a section of general gardening principles, there are two chapters listing plants for specific growing conditions or landscape uses. The greater part of the book is taken up by individual plant descriptions arranged alphabetically by the botanical names. Each description includes some indication of the conditions the plant prefers and its garden use. Among the plants are two California natives, ceanothus and Matilija poppy. Reference is also given to the very fine illustrations in the 72 color plates.

Wild Flowers of Southern Africa was originally published as *South African Wild Flowers for the Garden* and was written as a companion

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Baldwin Bonanza VIII

COLORFUL PLANTS for all occasions will dominate the Baldwin Bonanza XIII benefit plant sale May 1, just one week before Mother's Day, a traditional day for floral gifts. Members and their guests may gather at a preview party April 30, to have first choice of the extensive collection of colorful, popular, rare and exotic plants.

The California Arboretum Foundation's annual fund-raiser will feature hanging baskets with special strains and hybrids of the ever-popular fuchsias and impatiens that are noted for their large, colorful flowers. New Guinea impatiens, a relative newcomer with large colorful foliage, will also be available at Baldwin Bonanza XIII.

Other outstanding plants in bloom will be hybrid gerberas with large flowers in vivid colors that have been specially propagated by tissue culture to retain their desirable qualities. Prime plumeria cuttings from Hawaii with blooms in a variety of colors were rooted in greenhouses and have been well hardened off for more than a year in preparation for the sale.

Large quantities of colorful *Pelargoniums,* a gardener's favorite; daylilies that add color to the garden

Dark green leaves marked with yellow make the compact Schefflera arboricola 'Golden Elf' appeal to connoisseurs of houseplants.

during the warm summer months; and a large selection of quality orchids will give everyone the opportunity to select from the wide array of spectacular plants.

Another special feature of the Baldwin Bonanza is the collection of exotic and specialty plants that have been carefully selected for the plant sale. Buyers have the opportunity to choose from a special collection of plants including:

Haemanthus katharinae, commonly called the blood lily, is a bulbous plant with deciduous broad, bright-green leaves. It produces large round clusters of salmon-red flowers in late spring.

Ophiopogon planiscapus 'Arabicus' is commonly called black mondo because new green leaves turn purplish-black and remain this way. Plants are a collector's item and may be grown either in the ground or in an ornamental container.

Urginea maritima, called sea onion, forms groups of large fleshy bulbs up to 8 inches in diameter. Leaves are over 1 foot long and 6 inches wide and follow flower stalks of white flowers 6 or more feet tall.

Kaempferia pulchra is a choice small plant from Burma well suited to pot culture. The plant is grown for its ornamental silver/flecked green leaves and for the 1-inch wide lavender flowers. When the leaves disappear in winter, plants should be kept dry until spring.

Brighamia citrina is an extremely rare plant found only on sheer cliffsides on the island of Kauai, Hawaii. Brilliant green leaves top an unbranched, thickened fleshy stalk that may grow to 3 feet high in nature. Very long, fragrant yellowish flowers are produced among the leaves. Plants being sold are from seed produced by plants grown in the Tropical Greenhouse at the Arboretum.

Ixora coccinea, a houseplant in California, is a compact, pink-flowering cultivar of the popular evergreen jungle flame shrub.

Schefflera arboricola 'Golden Elf' is a most attractive new form of the very popular dwarf schefflera that has just been released and is in limited supply. Leaves on this sturdy houseplant are an eye-catching combination of dark green and yellow.

Ficus aspera The clown fig, a small

The sea onion (Urginea maritima) *sends up 6-foot flower stalks.*

Specimens of the endangered Brighamia citrina *offered for sale were grown from seed produced at the Arboretum.* ***(Photos by William Aplin)***

shrub or tree from the South Pacific, is grown for its attractive leaves flecked and blotched ivory-white against a background of grass-green and milky-green. Inedible but attractive small figs are also green and white.

Hibiscus rosa-sinensis 'Copperi' The checkered hibiscus is a small tropical shrub grown for its exotic leaves of several shades of green interspersed with white. In good light, the margins are rosy-pink. The plant produces small scarlet flowers and grows equally well in a pot or hanging basket.

All of the above plants represent a small portion of the many plants that will be on sale including the latest Arboretum introductions.

Don't forget the dates April 30 and May 1.

Orchid fanciers can choose among many different cattleya cultivars.

The leaves of the checkered hibiscus (Hibiscus rosa-sinensis) *are splotched with several different shades of green.*

The unusual leaf color of black mondo (Ophiopogon planiscapus 'Arabicus') *makes the plant a dramatic accent in gardens or containers.*

NEW BOOKS
(continued from LASCA page 4)

volume to the book just described. In Part I the author gives general information on the collection and propagation of native plant material. She also gives suggestions on landscape uses. Part II is divided into sections on succulents, bulbs, annuals and perennials and shrubs and trees. The alphabetical descriptions contain a considerable amount of information on propagation and care. To keep the reader from being overwhelmed by the wide choice of plants, Mrs. Eliovson assigned one to three stars to each plant indicating its relative attractiveness. After looking through the many beautiful color photographs, however, you may decide that you must have more South African plants.

The third book, *Proteas for Pleasure,* concentrates on one specific group of South African plants. These striking flowers, which last so well whether fresh or dried, are always noticed in flower arrangements. Although proteas in general prefer acid, well-drained soil and do not like hot, dry winds, they are being grown in parts of Southern California, a fact that Mrs. Eliovson mentions. After general information on the botany and horticulture of proteas, each of the species is described and illustrated with a color photograph. The text has been revised and the revisions set in a different type size that is simply inserted into the original without resetting. While this is annoying because of the difference in type size, it is also informative because you can see to what extent the text has been changed.

— Joan DeFato

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
MARCH, APRIL, MAY, 1983

LOS ANGELES STATE AND COUNTY ARBORETUM, Arcadia

MARCH 5, 6 — 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Girl Scout Flower Show
Sierra Madres Girl Scout Council

MARCH 12 — 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Environmental Education Fair
Hosted by L.A. State & County Arboretum

MARCH 26 — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Herbal Symposium — Display
Herb Society of America

APRIL 2, 3 — Sat. 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Specialty Iris Show
Aril Society International

APRIL 9, 10 — 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Mame Show
Mame Bonsai Society of So. Calif.

APRIL 16, 17 — Sat. 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Amaryllis Show
Southern Calif. Hemerocallis & Amaryllis Society

APRIL 23, 24 — Sat. 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Rose Show
Pacific Rose Society

MAY 1 — 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Baldwin Bonanza
Plant Sale

MAY 15 — 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Epiphyllum Show
Epiphyllum Society

MAY 21, 22 — 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Satsuki Azalea Show
Satsuki Azalea Society

MAY 28, 29, 30 — 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Bonsai Show
Santa Anita Bonsai Society

MAY 28, 29, 30 — 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Fuchsia Show
National Fuchsia Society
All events sponsored by California Arboretum Foundation

DESCANSO GARDENS, La Canada

MARCH 5, 6 — 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Camellia Show
So. Calif. Camellia Society

MARCH 19, 20, Sat. 12 noon to 5 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Daffodil Show
So. Calif. Daffodil Society

APRIL 2 thru 17 — 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Spring Flower Show
Exhibits and displays

APRIL 30 thru MAY 8 — 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Bonsai Show
Descanso Bonsai Society

MAY 26 — 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Paseo por Descanso, a special walking tour
Reservations necessary
All events sponsored by Descanso Gardens Guild

VIRGINIA ROBINSON GARDENS Beverly Hills

$20 fee for each class
Call 446-8251 ext. 37 for reservations

MARCH 24 — 9:30 a.m.
Herb Growing, Cooking with Herbs and Herb Lore.
Paula Fishman

APRIL 14 — 9:30 a.m.
Silk Flower Arranging
Designer from Twigs
Classes sponsored by Friends of Virginia Robinson Gardens

SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN, Palos Verdes Peninsula

MARCH 6 — 2 p.m.
Talk — Healthy Houseplants
Ruth Penwell, owner of Whispering Flowers

MARCH 13 — 2 p.m.
Talk — Making Potpourri
Dodie Lyness

MARCH 20 — 2 p.m.
Demonstration — Container Gardening
Dr. Ward Youry, Instructor Cal State Long Beach

MARCH 27 — 2 p.m.
Talk — Home Landscaping
Stephen Stefanko, landscape consultant

APRIL 3 — 2 p.m.
Talk — Soil Treatment
Jack Engberg, GRO-POWER representative

APRIL 10 — 2 p.m.
Talk — Spring Colors
Dan Zilla, Elwood Nursery

APRIL 17 — 2 p.m.
"It's Spring" garden tour
Led by docents

APRIL 24 — 2 p.m.
Spring Concert
Palos Verdes Symphonic Band

MAY 14, 15 — 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Fiesta de Flores
Plant Sale

MAY 21, 22 — Sat. 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Rose Show
South Coast Rose Society
All events sponsored by South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation